

## CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claims 1-19 (canceled)

20. (original) A modified nucleotide compound which contains at least one sequence having the formula  $MN_3M$  wherein N is a phosphodiester-linked unmodified 2'-deoxynucleoside moiety containing at least one guanine, adenine, cytosine or thymine moiety and M is a methylphosphonate-containing deoxynucleotide.

Claims 21-38 (canceled)

39. (currently amended) The method of claim 21 wherein the A method of inhibiting the function of an RNA, which comprises: contacting said RNA, under conditions permissive of hybridization, RNA is contacted with a modified nucleotide compound which includes at least one sequence having the formula  $MN_3M$  wherein N is a phosphodiester-linked unmodified 2'-deoxynucleoside moiety containing at least one guanine, adenine, cytosine or thymine moiety and M is a methylphosphonate-containing deoxynucleoside.

40. (original) A method of identifying a nucleotide compound having a combination of nuclease resistance and the ability to form an RNase H substrate when in complex with an RNA, which method comprises:

- (i) preparing modified nucleotide compounds;
- (ii) selecting by exo-and endonuclease digestion those modified nucleotide compounds of (i) which are nuclease-resistant as shown by being capable of forming and electrophoretically migrating as a duplex with a complementary nucleotide compound; and

- (iii) selecting by RNase H digestion those of the nuclease-resistance nucleotide compounds of (ii) which act as substrates for RNase H when hybridized with a complementary RNA.

Claims 41-43 (canceled)

44 (currently amended) A compound containing at least 2 separate nuclease resistant components each consisting of 2 or more contiguous phosphodiester-linked 2' deoxynucleosides; wherein at least one of said contiguous phosphodiester-linked 2' deoxynucleosides is unmodified. ~~The compound of claim 42 which,~~ when complexed with a complementary RNA, confers RNase H sensitivity upon the RNA.

Claims 45-48 (canceled)

49. (currently amended) A compound containing at least 2 separate nuclease resistant components each consisting of 2 or more contiguous phosphodiester-linked 2' deoxynucleosides; wherein at least one of said contiguous phosphodiester-linked 2' deoxynucleosides is unmodified and wherein said compound further comprises a modified oligonucleotide or polynucleotide, wherein the modified oligonucleotide or polynucleotide consists of at least one moiety which confers endonuclease resistance and at least one moiety which confers exonuclease resistance. ~~The compound of claim 47 wherein the portion of the compound that can function as an RNase H substrate is located between the moiety conferring exonuclease resistance and the moiety conferring endonuclease resistance.~~

50-52 (canceled)